

Attorney's Docket: 1999DE121
Serial No.: 09/578,420
Group: 1714

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A process for the preparation of (metal) salts of alkylphosphonous acids, ~~which comprises~~ comprising the step of reacting elemental yellow phosphorus with alkyl halides in the presence of at least one base selected from the group consisting of carbonates, bicarbonates, amides, alkoxides, and amine bases and/or solid hydroxides as bases.
2. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out in a two-phase system comprising the at least one base and an organic solvent.
3. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the alkyl halides employed are methyl chloride or methyl bromide.
4. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 42, wherein the organic ~~solvents employed are~~ solvent is selected from the group consisting of straight-chain or branched alkanes, alkyl-substituted aromatic solvents, water-immiscible or only partially water-miscible alcohols, ~~or ethers, alone or in combination with one another and mixtures thereof.~~
5. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 42, wherein the organic solvent ~~employed is~~ toluene, alone or in combination with ~~alcohols~~ an alcohol.
6. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out in the presence of a phase-transfer catalyst.
7. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 6, wherein the phase-transfer catalyst is a tetraalkylphosphonium halide, triphenylalkylphosphonium halide or tetra-organylammonium halide.

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8. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the temperature during the reaction is from -20 to +60°C.
9. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the temperature is from 0 to 30°C.
10. (Previously Presented) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reaction is carried out at a pressure of from 0 to 10 bar.
11. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the yellow phosphorus is suspended or dissolved in a solvent or solvent mixture and then reacted with an alkyl halide and the at least one base.
12. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the yellow phosphorus and the alkyl halide are reacted in a molar ratio of from 1:1 to 1:3, where the molar ratio of yellow phosphorus to the at least one base is from 1:1 to 1:5.
13. (Currently Amended) A process as claimed in claim 42, wherein the two-phase system obtained after the reaction is separated and further processed.
14. (Withdrawn) The use of a (metal) salt of an alkylphosphonous acid prepared by a process as claimed in claim 1 as a precursor for chemical syntheses.
15. (Withdrawn) The use of a (metal) salt of an alkylphosphonous acid prepared by a process as claimed in claim 1 for the preparation of organophosphorus compounds.

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16. (Withdrawn) The use of a (metal) salt of an alkylphosphonous acid prepared by a process as claimed in claim 1 as a flame retardant or for the preparation of flame retardants.
17. (Withdrawn) The use of a (metal) salt of an alkylphosphonous acid prepared by a process as claimed in claim 1 for the preparation of flame retardants for thermoplastic polymers, such as polyethylene terephthalate, polybutylene terephthalate or polyamide.
18. (Withdrawn) The use of a (metal) salt of an alkylphosphonous acid prepared by a process as claimed in claim 1 for the preparation of flame retardants for thermosetting resins, such as unsaturated polyester resins, epoxy resins, polyurethanes or acrylates.